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REPORT BY THE

# Comptroller General

OF THE UNITED STATES

# One-Stop Inspection System Speeds The Entry Of International Travelers

To find ways to speed the entry of international travelers into the United States, the Customs Service, in a joint effort with the Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and the Immigration and Naturalization Service, has tested a one-stop inspection system. The one-stop system reduces travelers' time spent waiting in line for and clearing the primary inspection process and results in more efficient use of Customs and Immigration inspectors. However, its effect on the enforcement of entry laws and regulations is unclear.

Because of the clearly demonstrated gains of the one-stop system regarding timeliness and efficiency and the uncertain and perhaps nonexistent drawbacks from a law enforcement standpoint, GAO believes that the one-stop inspection system is an improvement over the procedures used in the past.

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COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON D.C. 20548

B-206770

The Honorable Sam M. Gibbons
Chairman, Subcommittee on Trade
Committee on Ways and Means
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Because of concerns about the need to speed the entry of international travelers, your subcommittee in its fiscal year 1982 authorization for the U.S. Customs Service, required that Customs, in a joint effort with the Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and the Immigration and Naturalization Service, conduct a 6-month test of new Federal inspection systems in at least two major international airports. This report is in response to your May 4, 1981, request that we monitor and observe these tests.

We found that the tested procedures expedited the flow of international travelers through the Federal inspection process. However, their effect on the enforcement of entry laws and regulations is unclear. For example, the number of illegal imports of merchandise and currency seized increased at Los Angeles but decreased at Miami.

The inspection agencies selected the Los Angeles and Miami International Airports as test locations. The test started on August 4, 1981, and ended on January 31, 1982. Only one system was tested. It featured a one-stop inspection, conducted before travelers claimed their checked baggage rather than the traditional two-stop process. The one-stop inspection is essentially the system we previously recommended. 1/

The enforcement concerns of the Federal inspection agencies are:

--The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), an agency of the Department of Justice, determines the admissibility of each individual seeking entry into the country.

--The Customs Service, an agency of the Department of the Treasury, collects revenue on imported products, interdicts and seizes contraband (including narcotics and illegal drugs), and enforces more than 400 provisions of law for 40 other Federal agencies.

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1/Report on "More Can Be Done to Speed the Entry of International Travelers" (GGD-79-84, August 30, 1979).

--The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), an agency of the Department of Agriculture, prevents the entry of diseased or infected plants, foods, and animals.

To varying degrees, travelers are inspected by officers of one or more of these Federal agencies.

Prior to the test of the one-stop system at the Los Angeles International Airport, a citizen bypass system was used. Under citizen bypass, U.S. citizens with passports were not subjected to the traditional two-stop inspection system which was used at Miami--an Immigration and then a Customs primary inspection--rather, they by-passed the Immigration inspection. After they claimed their checked baggage, U.S. citizens underwent a one-stop inspection at Customs, where the Customs inspector performed Immigration and Customs clearance. The initial agriculture inspection for all travelers was performed by the Customs inspector. Under the one-stop system, one inspector conducts the inspection for all agencies. These inspectors screen individuals--prior to claiming their baggage--to separate the travelers requiring detailed inspection from the majority that do not.

The Federal inspection agencies' test of an alternative inspection system at Miami and Los Angeles demonstrated that:

--The one-stop inspection system does speed the entry of international travelers in comparison with the prior systems. The time travelers spent waiting to complete the primary inspection process at Miami and Los Angeles decreased by about 23 and 17 minutes. These times represent a 39 and a 35 percent decrease, respectively.

--Because less time was required to conduct the primary inspection, since one inspector carries out the primary inspection functions of all agencies, a more efficient use of Customs and Immigration inspectors resulted.

--The agencies' enforcement results, compared with those of a year earlier, were mixed. For example, Customs' seizures of drugs, merchandise, and currency at Miami declined 32 percent--from 414 to 283. On the other hand, the same seizures at Los Angeles increased by 42 percent--from 530 to 750. In this connection, Customs officials told us that the impact of the system on their enforcement activities is unclear.

Thus, overall, the test has demonstrated that the one-stop inspection system--while speeding the entry of travelers and increasing the productivity of inspectors--has an unclear effect on law enforcement. Because of the clearly demonstrated gains of the one-stop system regarding timeliness and efficiency and the uncertain and perhaps non-existent drawbacks from a law enforcement standpoint, we believe that the one-stop inspection system is an improvement over the procedures used in the past. In evaluating the test system, it would be appropriate to consider other systems, including those being used at other airports, or modifications to the test system. As we point out, some improvements can be made to the system tested.

The processing of international travelers, however, requires the involvement of not only the Federal inspection agencies but also the cooperation of airport operators and the airlines. Although the testing and implementation of an alternative inspection system is part of the solution to handling the increasing number of travelers, other factors that need to be considered are the adequacy of Federal staffing resources, the Federal inspection facilities, and the problems caused by peaking--the mass arrival of travelers occurring when flights arrive at about the same time.

For example, the number of Customs and INS inspectors at Miami was a critical factor in the time spent by travelers waiting for the one-stop primary inspection. If additional inspectors had been available, more primary inspection stations could have been opened which would have reduced the time travelers spent waiting for the primary inspection. In addition, the Los Angeles and Miami airport operators have already made extensive modifications to facilities to accommodate the test of the one-stop system. And, as you know, alternative solutions to the peaking problems are the subject of a separate request from your subcommittee. We plan to report to you on those matters in July 1982.

The Federal inspection agencies are in the process of preparing their evaluation of the test. The one-stop system is still being used at the Los Angeles and Miami airports. Appendix I to this report contains our observations and conclusions on the alternative one-stop inspection system.

Since the test did not end until January 31, 1982, and to meet the subcommittee's reporting deadline, we did not submit this report to the Federal agencies involved for their official comments. The objectives, scope, and methodology of our review are shown in appendix X.

As arranged with your office, we plan no further distribution of this report until 3 days from its issue date, unless you publicly announce its contents earlier. At that time we will send copies to the heads of the Federal agencies involved and other interested parties. Copies will be made available to others upon request.

Sincerely yours,

Charles A. Bowsher

Comptroller General
of the United States

## Results of GAO's Assessment of the Federal Inspection Agencies' Test of an Alternative One-Stop Inspection System

As required by the Customs Procedural Reform and Simplification Act of 1978, we studied the clearance process for individuals entering the United States. In August 1979 we issued a report "More Can Be Done To Speed The Entry of International Travelers" (GGD-79-84, August 30, 1979), recommending the adoption of a one-stop inspection process to expedite passenger processing. Subsequently, the House Committee on Ways and Means provided, in its Fiscal Year 1982 Authorization Report for Customs (HR 97-21; Apr. 10, 1981), that the agencies conduct a 6-month test of alternative systems to facilitate passenger entry. The Federal inspection agencies--the Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), and the U.S. Customs Service--decided to test the one-stop system we recommended.

The prior inspection process for non-U.S. citizens at Los Angeles and for all travelers at Miami was the two-stop system. The Immigration inspection, completed before travelers claimed their baggage, consisted of an interview and check of documents to determine whether the individual could be admitted to the United States. The Immigration inspectors were also alert for possible health problems. Aliens entering this country permanently were photographed and fingerprinted. However, U.S. citizens at Los Angeles with passports bypassed the Immigration inspection in what is commonly called citizen bypass. For U.S. citizens, the Customs inspector performed both the Immigration and Customs clearance.

After travelers--citizens and aliens--claimed their baggage, a Customs inspection was made, which consisted of an interview of individuals or heads of families. During the interview, the inspector entered the traveler's name and date of birth into the Treasury Enforcement Communications System (TECS) for a computer check against a list of known or suspected violators of entry laws and regulations. The inspector reviewed the traveler's Customs Declaration for an indication of compliance with certain Agriculture and Customs laws and examined the hand-carried baggage. Unless problems arose concerning compliance with the agencies' inspection requirements, the travelers were free to exit the Federal inspection area. Travelers with problems were referred to a Customs secondary area for further inspection.

The alternative system that the Federal inspection agencies decided on, and which they decided to test during August 1981 through January 1982, is essentially the system we previously recommended. Under this system, travelers, immediately upon deplaning, come to a primary inspection station without their checked

baggage. At this point one inspector--Customs or Immigration--conducts the primary inspection for all the agencies. These inspectors screen individuals to separate those travelers requiring detailed inspections from the majority that do not.

Depending on the results of the primary inspection, travelers either can claim their baggage and exit through a Customs control point, or undergo a more detailed inspection. Referrals for additional inspection can be made by the primary inspectors or by roving Customs and APHIS inspectors who may question the passengers once their checked baggage has been claimed. Customs', Immigration, or APHIS inspectors conduct the secondary inspection.

## FASTER PROCESSING OF INTERNATIONAL TRAVELERS AND MORE EFFICIENT USE OF CUSTOMS AND IMMIGRATION INSPECTORS IS ACHIEVED WITH THE ONE-STOP INSPECTION SYSTEM

The one-stop inspection system sped the entry of travelers, and provided a more efficient use of the Customs and Immigration inspectors.

--First, travelers did not have to wait to claim their baggage prior to the primary inspection.

--Second, the time required to complete the primary inspection process was reduced.

--Third, because the one-stop system required less time to conduct the primary inspection and since one inspector carried out the primary inspection functions of all agencies, a more efficient use of Customs and Immigration inspectors resulted.

Test results showed that upon completion of the primary inspection, 70 to 75 percent of travelers were determined to be in compliance with the agencies' requirements and experienced very little delay in leaving the Federal inspection facility.

### Time needed to conduct primary inspection was reduced

Our observations of the alternative one-stop inspection system at the Miami and Los Angeles airports show that travelers were cleared faster than they would have been under the previous inspection systems. The time travelers spent waiting to complete the primary inspection process at Miami and Los Angeles decreased by about 23 and 17 minutes. These times represent a 39 percent and a 35 percent decrease, respectively. Included in that amount of time is the time required to conduct the primary inspection. This was reduced by about 16 seconds, or 14 percent, and 96 seconds, or 44 percent, respectively.

In Miami, a traveler spent an average of 36 minutes from the time the plane arrived at the gate until the primary inspection process was completed. This is about 23 minutes faster than the 59 minutes required under the two-stop system as reported in an April 1981 Customs report. There is no data available on times under other various systems used at Miami prior to the test. However, our August 1979 report showed that in fiscal year 1978 the traditional two-stop process--waiting in inspection lines, waiting to claim baggage, and actually clearing inspection--took an average of 59 minutes.

International travelers at Los Angeles experienced about a 17-minute reduction in the time spent waiting to complete the primary inspection process. The Airport Model Analysis System (AMAS) test conducted at Los Angeles on July 10, 1981, measured the average time required for a traveler to complete both the INS and Customs primary inspections from the time the aircraft was ready to unload passengers until the travelers completed the primary inspections. The test showed it took about 48 minutes. The average time to complete the joint INS/Customs primary inspection during the 6-month test was 31 minutes, or about 17 minutes less than the prior system.

In our August 1979 report we reported that the average time spent in the Federal inspection process--waiting in inspection lines, waiting to claim baggage, and actually being inspected--at Los Angeles was 81 minutes under the traditional two-stop inspection system. As noted above, under the one-stop inspection system, the time spent waiting to complete the primary inspection averaged about 31 minutes.

The AMAS test at Los Angeles and a similar test at Miami on June 20, 1981, measured the time required to conduct the primary inspections under the prior systems. The results of the Los Angeles test showed that the INS primary inspection took about 2.4 minutes and the Customs primary inspection took about 1.8 minutes. By adjusting the INS processing time to account for citizen bypass, the total primary processing time was 3.6 minutes. The total primary processing time was 114 seconds in Miami. In contrast, our observations of one-stop primary inspection disclosed that the average time in Los Angeles was about 2 minutes, or about 96 seconds less than the prior system. In Miami, the average time was about 98 seconds, or about 16 seconds less.

In Miami, about 51 passengers an hour were processed by a primary inspector while in Los Angeles the average was 29 an hour. Inspectors in Miami, however, did not fully comply with the test procedures. They did not check 100 percent of hand-carried baggage for compliance with Agriculture's requirements, nor did they

make a TECS inquiry on all passengers. In contrast, the inspectors in Los Angeles were diligent in carrying out test procedures. Miami Customs and INS officials told us that the volume of travelers required that the inspectors exercise some selective compliance with the test procedures.

Because the use of one inspector to conduct the primary inspection for all agencies has reduced the average inspection time, more travelers can be processed by the inspection staff. Under the prior systems, there were duplicative inspection procedures that satisfied the enforcement concerns of both Customs and INS. Repetitive questions were also asked of the travelers. Thus, by combining these procedures and questions in the screening process under the one-stop system, a more efficient use of Customs and INS inspectors results.

Retrieval of checked baggage after the one-stop inspection helped reduce processing times

With the one-stop inspection system, on the average, travelers were able to begin the primary inspection about 24 minutes earlier by not waiting to retrieve their checked baggage. U.S. citizens usually enjoyed an even greater advantage. Under a prior system they bypassed the INS primary and went directly to the baggage claim area to wait for checked baggage before beginning the Customs inspection. However, both citizen and alien travelers should benefit from the one-stop system at Miami and Los Angeles since the average passenger clears the primary inspection in about 36 and 31 minutes, respectively, and is usually free to exit the Federal inspection area once one's checked baggage--which by then should be in the baggage claim area--has been claimed.

Except for congestion in the baggage delivery area when two or more flights arrived at Los Angeles at the same time, the delivery of checked baggage was accomplished with minimal delays. Airlines delivered the first bag about 15 minutes after travelers began to deplane and the last bag in about 35 minutes, for an average delivery time of 25 minutes. For flights of 100 travelers or more, the average delivery time increased to 29 minutes with the last bag not being delivered until 43 minutes after passengers began to deplane. At Miami, the average baggage delivery time was about 24 minutes.

Inspector staffing levels--a critical factor in waiting times at Miami International Airport

Although the inspectors processed more travelers per hour under the one-stop system and the Miami International Airport operator provided 36 primary inspection stations, Customs and INS did

not have enough primary inspectors to handle the volume of travelers. On many occasions the number of travelers justified opening additional inspection stations, but there were not enough inspectors to staff them. Thus, travelers were subjected to unnecessary delays in the Federal inspection process.

The inspector staffing levels are a critical factor that determines how long travelers will have to wait prior to primary inspection. In many instances the backlog of travelers could have been substantially reduced by opening three or four more primary stations. For example, the 8,662 travelers that were processed during an 8-hour peak period on January 6, 1982, had to wait an average of 53 minutes for the primary inspection. If Customs and INS had been able to staff 4 more primary inspection stations--17 stations were open--the average wait could have been reduced to 29 minutes, and except for one 30-minute period, none of the travelers would have had to wait more than 41 minutes.

Miami airport officials estimate that international travelers requiring Federal inspection will increase from 3.3 million in 1980 to 5.1 million in 1985. Although the one-stop system results in more efficient use of resources, Customs and INS will need additional inspectors to process the projected increase in travelers in a timely manner. Under the one-stop system, about 1,600 to 1,800 travelers can be processed per hour--an average wait of 30 minutes--if all inspection lanes are open.

## Number of travelers referred for secondary inspection increased

Under the one-stop system, even though the majority of the travelers were free to leave after they claimed their baggage, there was an increase in the number of referrals for a Customs or APHIS secondary inspection in part because an inspector believed a further examination was warranted. Hence, for some travelers, there may have been an unnecessary increase in the total time required to clear the inspection process.

While about 30 percent of the travelers processed in Miami during the test were referred to secondary, a Customs report for a period just prior to the test showed that about 18 percent were so referred. During the test in Los Angeles, 25 percent of the travelers were referred to secondary. Customs' data showed the national average for referrals to secondary under all systems was about 15 percent in fiscal year 1980. As the primary inspectors and roving inspectors become familiar with the one-stop system, we believe the number of travelers referred for secondary inspection should decline.

The number of exit control points affected travelers' departure

Unnecessary delays were experienced by travelers at the Miami airport because Customs did not open enough exit control points. At Los Angeles, travelers normally experienced very little delay in moving through the Customs control points--where they were either directed to exit or to proceed to a secondary inspection--after claiming their checked baggage.

With eight control points available, Customs in Los Angeles normally staffed only enough to provide for an orderly flow of travelers. The inspectors at the control points have the option of selecting additional travelers for secondary inspection, but generally they relied on the decision of the primary or roving inspector.

After the primary inspection process was completed and their baggage had been picked up, about 70 percent of the international travelers arriving in Miami were free to leave. In many instances, however, we observed that travelers experienced unnecessary delays at the Customs control point. Most of the time during our observations only one control point was open in Miami, resulting in unnecessary delays to travelers, especially during peak passenger arrivals.

Miami Customs officials contended that their low level of staffing prevented them from opening enough check points to clear the travelers expeditiously. Although APHIS inspectors were used at Los Angeles periodically to replace Customs inspectors at the control points, Customs officials in Miami believe the APHIS inspectors would have to be trained before they could assume that responsibility. However, their use would have alleviated some of the pressure on Customs' staff.

Because of the physical arrangement of Customs' control points in Miami and the use of skycaps to handle baggage, confusion abounded. This particular problem did not exist at the Los Angeles airport. At Los Angeles, travelers can use carts to carry their own bags; skycaps are usually not allowed in the exit area. Starting in December 1981, Customs in Miami increased the number of control points to avoid unnecessary delays and is now seeking ways to avoid the confusion at the control points.

INSPECTION AGENCIES' LAW ENFORCEMENT RESULTS ARE MIXED

The agency's enforcement results compared with those of a year earlier, were mixed. For example, Customs' drugs, merchandise, and currency seizures at Miami declined 32 percent--from 414

to 283. On the other hand, the same seizures at Los Angeles increased by 42 percent--from 530 to 750. In this connection, Customs officials told us that the impact of the system on their enforcement activities is unclear. On the other hand, the number of quarantinable agricultural products and the number of travelers denied admission to the United States increased in Miami. In Los Angeles, the number of quarantinable products increased and there was no data on denied admissions.

Percentage of travelers denied admission to the United States--results unknown

The number of travelers denied admission into the United States by INS increased in Miami. Los Angeles INS officials were unable to provide pretest data. (See apps. II and III.)

In Miami, 12,547 travelers were referred to an INS secondary area during the test for a detailed examination of entry documentation. Of these, 855 were denied admission. Admission denials increased 81 percent during the test. Also, the percent of travelers referred to INS secondary increased from 4.4 during the pretest period to 6.8 during the test period. In Los Angeles, 6,161 travelers were referred to the INS secondary during the test. Of these, 85 travelers were denied admission. Although a majority of the INS inspectors told us that they believed the number of travelers denied admission during the test decreased, Los Angeles INS officials were unable to provide pretest data on admission denials. Thus, the extent of any increase or decrease in the Los Angeles INS enforcement results is unknown.

Seizures of non-admissible agricultural products by APHIS increased at both locations

The number of travelers referred to APHIS increased over that reported during the pretest period, and the number of referrals resulting in seizures of items not allowed into the country increased. The percentage of seizures compared to the number of travelers also increased under the one-stop system.

The number of travelers at the Miami and Los Angeles airports referred to APHIS' secondary increased about 67 percent and 223 percent, respectively. Over half of the referrals in Miami were made by APHIS screeners stationed in the baggage area. (See apps. IV and V.)

A partial explanation for the increased number of travelers referred to APHIS secondary is the involvement of inspectors from all three agencies in making referrals. Prior to the test, agriculture referrals were made by Customs inspectors who notified APHIS officials when agricultural products were found in the possession of travelers or in their baggage. APHIS officials then determined whether the products should be seized or released. Under the one-stop system, referrals are made by the primary inspectors, secondary Customs inspectors, and roving APHIS inspectors. Referrals to secondary are made when travelers answer "Yes" to APHIS questions on the Customs declaration, or more often, when they respond to questioning by the primary inspectors or fit the profile used by the roving APHIS inspectors.

The number of travelers at the Miami and Los Angeles airports that had agricultural products that were seized increased 3.2 percent and 56.4 percent, respectively. During the pretest period, seizures were made on 35 percent and 52 percent of the cases referred, whereas during the test period the percentage dropped to 22 and 25 percent, respectively. This reduction indicates that the inspectors should exercise more discretion when making referrals. Less than 1 percent of the travelers processed in Miami and 1.7 percent in Los Angeles were found to have quarantinable agricultural products both during the test and pre-test periods.

Interceptions of pests and diseases determined to be of quarantine importance to APHIS after the products are seized also increased. (See apps. VI and VII.) Interceptions are determined when an examination of plants seized is completed, whereas animal products (meat, eggs, milk, cheese, fish, etc.) are considered an interception and destroyed immediately. Interceptions at the Miami and Los Angeles airports increased 34 percent and 164 percent, respectively, during the test period. From an enforcement viewpoint, however, less than seven-tenths of 1 percent of the travelers carried animal or plant products of quarantinable importance.

## Customs' interdiction of illegal imports varied

Customs' enforcement results were mixed for the Miami and Los Angeles airports during the test. While the number of Customs seizures in Miami of prohibited imports such as narcotics and dangerous drugs declined, the quantity and value of these items increased. Customs' headquarters officials told us that the impact of the system on its enforcement activities is unclear.

During a comparable 6 month pretest period, Customs made 414 seizures at Miami. During the test Customs made 283 seizures.

The number of drug seizures decreased from 318 to 211; currency seizures decreased from 33 to 31; and merchandise seizures decreased from 63 to 41. (See app. VIII.)

Although the total number of seizures made during the test at Miami declined, positive results did occur as the test progressed. For instance, drug seizures increased or remained constant for five consecutive months. The number of fugitive arrests increased from 55 during the pre-test period to 70 during the test period.

During a comparable 6 month pretest period in Los Angeles, Customs made 530 seizures. During the test, Customs made 750 seizures. The number of drug seizures decreased from 62 to 57. While there was a 48-percent increase in the number of merchandise and currency seizures, the value of such seizures increased 6 percent. (See app. IX.)

## CHANGES TO THE ONE-STOP SYSTEM COULD SPEED THE PROCESS EVEN MORE

During our observation of the test of the alternative one-stop inspection system, we noted three elements of the primary inspection process which we believe could be modified without seriously hampering the agencies' enforcement objectives and which would speed the entry of travelers even more.

### Inspection of Immigration Arrival Departure Record should be temporarily discontinued

While INS intended that the Immigration Arrival Departure Record--Form I-94--be used as the primary enforcement tool in the agency's Nonimmigrant Document Control system (NIDC) and statistical reporting system, its use for these objectives has not been successful. Efforts are underway to make improvements. Until then, entry of international travelers could be expedited if the inspection of I-94s was discontinued.

When entering the United States, a nonimmigrant alien--which about 65 to 75 percent of the travelers at Los Angeles and Miami are--is required to fill out the I-94 in duplicate. INS keeps the original and the alien keeps the duplicate. The form calls for such vital information as name, citizenship, passport number, United States and permanent address, airline, date and place of birth and location where the visa was issued. Upon leaving the United States, the alien is required to surrender the copy to the airline, and INS then matches that copy with the original in its file.

INS officials admit to being years behind in this matching process. The backlog of I-94s grew from 4.2 million in April

1980 to about 30 million records by the end of fiscal year 1981, and is continuing to increase by about 1.6 million per month. INS is in the process of developing a system to repair its current NIDC system.

INS Washington officials responsible for the inspection and control of nonimmigrants told us the I-94 procedures are producing information of questionable usefulness, and that the requirement for the I-94s should be discontinued. But, enforcement officials said they at times use the I-94s to obtain information on the arrival and departure of nonimmigrants from certain countries.

During our observations of the primary inspection process, we noted that the inspectors spend as much or more time processing I-94s than with any other element, especially when two or more people traveling together are processed at the same time. We observed the following:

--An I-94 was required for every traveler regardless of age, whether they were members of the same family, or whether they were entering and leaving the United States on the same day.

--Travelers sometimes had not filled out the form completely or had not ensured that the copy of the original was legible, causing the inspector to have to spend additional time correcting the form.

--The process of separating the I-94, stamping each part of the form with the inspector's stamp, manually noting the type of visa and duration of stay, and coding the name is very time-consuming.

Until such time as INS repairs or replaces the I-94 system, consideration ought to be given to discontinuing the requirement for inspecting I-94s during the primary inspection process.

Selectivity should be allowed in making TECS inquiries

The test procedures required primary inspectors to query the TECS for each traveler between the ages of 14 and 70. TECS is a computer system providing Customs and INS enforcement data and is linked to the National Crime Information Center (NCIC). Entering each traveler's name and birthdate into the TECS takes a few seconds, depending upon the typing skills of the individual inspectors. Then the inspector spends a few seconds reading the computer printout.

Inspectors in Miami and Los Angeles told us that in their opinion it is a waste of time to make a TECS inquiry for every traveler. The inspectors believed that TECS inquiries should be made on a selective basis because a large number of travelers arrive from countries which experience has shown to be relatively "clean" of the criminal element, while other countries are known to be "dirty," thus justifying a closer scrutiny of the passengers by TECS.

Our observations disclosed that the inspectors in Miami were not making TECS inquiries on all travelers. However, the number of fugitive arrests resulting from TECS inquiries, which totaled 70 during the test, was up from 55 in a pre-test period. The inspectors believed the number of TECS inquiries could be reduced without a detrimental effect on enforcement while speeding the entry of international travelers. In our opinion, it would be reasonable to modify the one-stop to allow selectivity in making TECS inquiries as is being done at non-test locations.

Examination of all hand-carried baggage is not necessary

During the test, APHIS required that all hand baggage carried by international travelers be inspected during the primary inspection. Inspectors told us, as they did in the case of the TECS inquiries, that judgement should be exercised in deciding whether hand baggage should be examined. The inspectors told us that their questioning of travelers and their experience of knowing which flights are most likely to present agricultural problems should be the primary bases for selecting travelers for agricultural inspections.

At Miami, we noted that the inspectors examined hand-carried baggage for agricultural compliance only about 28 percent of the time. Yet, there is no evidence to suggest that an increase in quarantinable plants, food, or animals entering the country occurred.

APHIS' statistics in Miami disclosed that about 64 percent of the agricultural seizures during the test were made as a result of examination of checked baggage. The primary inspectors told us that these results indicate most travelers do not try to bring unauthorized agricultural items in their hand baggage. The inspectors believe that the requirement to examine all hand baggage should be relaxed to allow them to selectively determine which bags to inspect. Examination of all hand baggage slows down the primary inspection process.

CONCLUSIONS

The one-stop inspection system speeds the entry of travelers and results in a more efficient use of Customs and Immigration inspectors. If some of the primary inspection requirements were changed under the one-stop system, the entry of travelers would be quicker. The use of the Form I-94 could be temporarily discontinued and primary inspectors could be allowed to selectively make TECS inquiries and agricultural compliance inspections. Thus, because it would take less time to make the inspections, Customs and Immigration inspectors would be used more efficiently.

On the other hand, the agencies' enforcement results were mixed, compared with those of a year earlier. Given the mixed results of the test, a final assessment of the one-stop system is largely judgmental. But, because of the clearly demonstrated gains of the one-stop system regarding timeliness and efficiency and the uncertain and perhaps non-existent drawbacks from a law enforcement standpoint, we believe that the one-stop inspection system is an improvement over the procedures used in the past. In evaluating the test system, it would be appropriate to consider other systems, including those being used at other airports, or modifications to the test system. As we point out, some improvements can be made to the system tested.

APPENDIX II

## INS Enforcement Results
## Miami International Airport

| | Pretest (8-80 to 1-81) | Test (8-81 to 1-82) | Percent change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total aliens processed | 1,157,729 | 1,188,298 | + 2.6 |
| Number of aliens referred to secondary | 10,799 | 12,547 | +16.2 |
| Percent of aliens referred to secondary | .9 | 1.1 | +22.2 |
| Number of aliens denied admission | 473 | 855 | +80.8 |
| Percent of aliens denied admission that were referred to secondary | 4.4 | 6.8 | +54.5 |

## INS Enforcement Results
## Los Angeles International Airport

| | Pretest (8-80 to 1-81) (note a) | | Test (8-81 to 1-82) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total aliens processed | | - | 461,610 |
| Number of aliens referred to secondary | | - | 6,161 |
| Percent of aliens referred to secondary | | - | 1.3 |
| Number of aliens denied admission | | - | 85 |
| Percent of aliens denied admission that were referred to secondary | | - | 1.4 |

a/Los Angeles INS officials were unable to provide data for the pretest period.

## APHIS Enforcement Results
## Miami International Airport

| | Pretest (8-80 to 1-81) | Test (8-81 to 1-82) | Percent change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total travelers processed | 1,722,753 | 1,806,835 | + 4.9 |
| Number of travelers referred to APHIS secondary | 40,096 | 66,998 | +67.1 |
| Percent of travelers referred to secondary | 2.3 | 3.7 | +60.9 |
| Number of travelers with quarantinable agricultural products | a/ 14,019 | a/ 14,467 | + 3.2 |
| Percent of referred travelers with quarantinable products | 35.0 | 21.6 | -38.3 |
| Percent of total travelers with quarantinable agricultural products | .08 | .08 | - |

a/In some cases a traveler may have more than one agricultural product that may be quarantinable--for example, two oranges are one seizure, whereas an orange and an apple are two seizures. The total plant and animal seizures were 15,722 and 17,708, respectively.

## APHIS Enforcement Results
## Los Angeles International Airport

| | Pretest (8-80 to 1-81) | Test (8-81 to 1-82) | Percent change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total travelers processed | 646,347 | 720,349 | + 11.5 |
| Number of travelers referred to APHIS secondary | 15,430 | 49,870 | +223.0 |
| Percent of travelers referred to secondary | 2.4 | 6.9 | +187.5 |
| Number of travelers with quarantinable agricultural products | a/ 8,023 | a/ 12,550 | + 56.4 |
| Percent of referred travelers with quarantinable products | 52.0 | 25.2 | - 51.4 |
| Percent of total travelers with quarantinable agricultural products | 1.2 | 1.7 | + 41.7 |

a/In some cases a traveler may have more than one agricultural product that may be quarantinable--for example, two oranges are one seizure, whereas an orange and an apple are two seizures. The total plant and animal seizures were 8,530 and 14,903, respectively.

## APHIS Interceptions
## Miami International Airport

| | Pretest (8-80 to 1-81) | Test (8-81 to 1-82) | Percent change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total number of plant and animal quarantinable seizures | 15,722 | 17,708 | +12.6 |
| Total number of plant and animal interceptions of quarantinable importance | 4,472 | 5,968 | +33.5 |
| Percent of interceptions | 28.4 | 33.7 | +18.7 |

## APHIS Interceptions
## Los Angeles International Airport

| | Pretest (8-80 to 1-81) | Test (8-81 to 1-82) | Percent change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total number of plant and animal quarantinable seizures | 8,530 | 14,903 | + 74.7 |
| Total number of plant and animal interceptions of quarantinable importance | 2,125 | 5,615 | +164.3 |
| Percent of interceptions | 24.9 | 37.6 | + 51.0 |

APPENDIX VIII

## Customs Enforcement Results
## Miami International Airport

| | Pretest (8-80 to 1-81) | Test (8-81 to 1-82) | Percent change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Drug seizures | 318 | 211 | -34 |
| Total pounds | 2,589 | 3,207 | +24 |
| Merchandise and currency seizures | | | |
| Number | 96 | 72 | -25 |
| Value | $983,527 | $581,249 | -41 |
| Total seizures (drugs, merchandise, and currency) | 414 | 283 | -32 |
| Fugitive arrests | 55 | 70 | +27 |

APPENDIX IX

## Customs Enforcement Results
## Los Angeles International Airport

| | Pretest (8-80 to 1-81) | Test (8-81 to 1-82) | Percent change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Drug seizures | 62 | 57 | - 8 |
| Total pounds | 48.1 | 34.4 | - 28 |
| Merchandise and currency seizures | | | |
| Number | 468 | 693 | + 48 |
| Value | $3.3 million | $3.5 million | + 6 |
| Total seizures (drugs, merchandise, and currency) | 530 | 750 | + 42 |
| Fugitive arrests | 14 | 28 | +100 |

## Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

We conducted this review in response to a May 4, 1981, request from the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Trade, House Committee on Ways and Means. Our objectives were to monitor and observe the 6-month test of new Federal inspection systems tested by the U.S. Customs Service in a joint effort with the Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and the Immigration and Naturalization Service. The inspection agencies selected the Los Angeles and Miami International Airports as the test locations. The test started on August 4, 1981, and ended on January 31, 1982. Only one system was tested.

At the test locations we (1) collected data on the results obtained from inspection of travelers, (2) observed inspections, (3) observed the checked baggage delivery systems, and (4) interviewed inspectors and officers of the inspection agencies concerning their procedures and ways to expedite the process. We also talked with inspection agency officials at headquarters and in the Miami and Los Angeles regional offices, and with airport operator personnel at both locations.

The review was performed in accordance with GAO's current "Standards for Audit of Governmental Organizations, Programs, Activities, and Functions."

## Methodology

The test was conducted at the Miami International and Los Angeles International airports for a 6-month period. Our responsibility was to evaluate and monitor the testing done by the three inspection agencies.

In order to achieve the objectives of the assignment, we randomly selected days--27 at each location--and then randomly selected a 6 hour time period within each selected day. The 6-hour period was selected with a method so that the time period with twice the number of flights had two times the chance of selection.

We also selected days--25 at each location--and time periods in a similar manner to verify the time it took for checked baggage to reach the baggage claim area.

The estimates are made at the 95 percent confidence level using the appropriate statistical formulas.

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